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AN INVESTIGATION INTO
THE PROBLEM OF THE FALLEN WOMAN AS TREATED
BY THE MODERN SOCIAL DRAMATISTS
OF GERMANY.

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School
of the
University of Minnesota

by

Rose Muckley

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PROBLEM OF THE FALLEN WOMAN AS
TREATED BY THE MODERN SOCIAL DRAMATISTS OF GERMANY.

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INTRODUCTION.

The drama world of this age is interested largely in problem plays because contemporary life lays great stress upon sex questions. The world has gone mad, so to speak, over sex education, eugenics and the social evil. Intelligent people are accepting the opinion of the best biological and social scientists that sex morality is one of the crying needs of the present day. It is the custom now to discuss sex subjects in public and private with a view to enlightening people about the evils resulting from the improper relations between the sexes. This tendency is reflected by dramatists. In their delineation of society they aim to expose the dangerous and even corrupt practices in the relationships between men and women in order to stir the thinking world into a demand for reform.

The subject of fallen woman which has engaged the dramatic mind for centuries has in modern times been given a somewhat different emphasis. Before the recognition of the "Bürgerliche Tragödie" as a serious and suf-

ficiently dignified drama, German dramatists wrote Mary Magdalen plays, taking the biblical Magdalen as the fallen woman type. Now they no longer treat her as the biblical type, but as a modern woman out of actual life, who has transgressed the laws that society has put upon the sexes in their relationship to each other. They present her rarely as a prostitute but as an innocent woman led astray by natural impulse or by the overwhelming force of circumstance. (Aside from Wedekind's "Büchse der Pandora" do drama covered by this thesis deals, out and out, with the prostitute.)

This investigation covers those social dramas, serious plays not comedies, that present woman who has had a moral lapse in sexual matters. Since unmarried woman is the theme of most German problem plays, special attention will be given her here. In life she is found everywhere and is always a pathetic figure, for, according to the codes of social morality, she has lost her maidenhood and yet has not attained a matronhood sacred in dignity and honor.

The problem of the fallen woman is a great

social problem. It behooves society to solve this question for good if possible and not for harm. This thesis aims, consequently, to discover what helpful suggestions toward a solution of the fallen woman problem, the modern social dramatists of Germany offer through their presentation of the Magdalen in the drama. As the German naturalistic school is said to be a great educative and reforming force, it is interesting to discover exactly what it has contributed toward a solution of this problem. In the first place, what do these dramatists give as the causes of woman's fall; causes, both as inherent in her character and as existing outside of her character? Secondly, what, according to them, are the results following her transgression? Each dramatist's actual and particular contribution to a solution of this problem, is what this investigation aims to discover.

THE "BÜRGERLICHE TRAGÖDIE."

The first form of the social drama in Germany is the "Bürgerliche Tragödie" at the close of the eighteenth century. Up to this period dramatic taste and good form- a legacy from the classics- sanctioned only those tragedies dealing with the problems of the higher classes, kings, princes and nobles, - great men in great positions. The lower classes, to the mind of the dramatist, could not present on the stage tragic conflict that was universal or universally appealing; because subject to laws to which the nobles were not, they were not free to act as individuals obeying a passion that was not subject to outside restraint. It was only in the comedy, that the middle and lower classes played a large rôle. Their vices and follies were ridiculed, thus producing comedy. This conventional idea governing dramatic poesy was accepted universally in Germany, in France, in England, by poets and critics, far into the eighteenth century. In the year 1731 in England, Lillo ventured to present the middle class in serious dramatic composition with his "London Merchant." This

was followed by "The Fatal Curiosity" in 1736. More wrote his "Gamester" in 1753. In the field of the novel, Richardson essayed to present family life in his "Pamela", 1741, and "Clarissa Harlowe", 1748. English fiction was beginning to become democratic and France and Germany followed the example.

In Germany, Lessing was the first dramatist who overthrew the old convention because it was wrong in that it did not represent life. He began to show that there was silent heroism in the lives of the common people. The very commonplaceness of their lives he glorified, for he aimed to present the strifes and efforts of the human heart. Whether it was in the breast of a king or of a humble subject that a struggling heart was beating made no difference to Lessing. In the domain of the heart there are no kings and no subjects, but all are equally human. (In his book,* Adolph Stahr writes:"In dem dasz Lessing in das Tiefste der individuellen Seelenzustände, Kämpfe und Verirrungen hineingriff, gewann er auch für die niederen Sphäre des Menschenlebens, ein Feld wo sich der absolute Werth,

*either ming
or plus.*

* "Lessing, Sein Leben und seine Werke." p. 157.

die Freiheit, die souveräne Unumschränktheit des Individuums geltend machen konnte, die der Tragödie nothwendig ist." The plays of Lessing were the first German dramas that offered the public a representation of life irrespective of caste and position.

"MISS SARA SAMPSON" (1755).

Lessing's "Miss Sara Sampson" is the first "Bürgerliche Tragödie" and it is also the starting point of the modern feminist literary movement in Germany. "Diese neue Kunst im Theater- nämlich das ewig-Weibliche hinein zu ziehen, beginnt hier"* Contrary to former practices in the serious drama where woman appeared either as a queen or a "mere mistress", Lessing's social dramas introduce woman who takes her part as woman. The fallen woman type in Lessing's plays, though she is still the mistress, plays a part in the development of the drama and furthers its action, which formerly she did not do. Lessing is not interested in making woman's transgressions his problem. The sex experience of woman is brought in in a secondary way; in "Miss Sara Sampson," for example, to explain the

* Borinski: "Lessing" p. 98 of Vol. I.

character of Marwood. This is the only play of Lessing's which approaches the fallen woman problem.

In "Miss Sara Sampson" two women, Sara Sampson and Marwood, lay claim to the love of the same man, Mellefont. Sara loves him honestly and does not know that he is under obligation to any other woman and Marwood maintains her right to his love, because she is the mother of his child. Expecting to frustrate the happiness between Mellefont and Sara, Marwood comes to town with her child in order to bring about their separation. She is jealous of Sara. When she finds that she cannot destroy the love between Sara and Mellefont, Media-like, she threatens Mellefont with the murder of the child as a sacrifice to her desire for vengeance. When this threat does not have the desired result and she finds herself unable in every way to accomplish her purpose, she poisons Sara and escapes.

Lessing presents in Marwood the direct opposite of his heroine, Sara. The bold, selfish, revengeful Marwood, a fallen woman, stands as the very antithesis of the modest, kind, and forgiving Sara, who is

innocent and pure. Marwood aggressively employs all her coquettish wiles and charms of personality to draw men to herself and away from other women. In her bold aggressiveness we blame her more than we do Mellefont. Though Mellefont had enjoyed misleading women, and was reputed to have misled many, he did not seduce Sara. Sara, however, is not the girl who would arouse such desires in a man, for she had a strong consciousness of the beauty of virtue. Whether Sara would have yielded to an immoral request from Mellefont, the author does not say. But in his other "Bürgerliche Tragödie," "Emilia Galotti," the heroine, a Sara type, sought death because she found herself unequal to conquer temptation. Marwood fell because she would not deny herself self-gratification. Lessing, therefore, implies that an immoral sex experience in woman is largely a question of the character of the woman.

*misleading
Eng. & German*

In the bürgerliche tragedies of Goethe and Schiller, there is nothing upon the subject of the fallen woman problem. The few social dramas penned by these great masters ignore this question entirely.

"STURM UND DRANG" AND THE SOCIAL DRAMA.

In the period of the Sturm und Drang, the social drama appears with great significance. It offers the modern social drama in the second stage of its development. The "Bürgerliche Tragödie," the first form of the social drama, had been an emancipation proclamation of the middle class. Its dramatists emphasized the fact that the middle class is able to take care of its own affairs without intervention from the upper classes; they proclaimed the middle class a component part of society with a clear class consciousness. They acknowledged a difference in social classes, and regarded that difference as legitimate and good but they wanted to have the middle classes recognized as a dignified part of society and as having the same human rights as the upper classes. With the growth of class consciousness, the middle class began to rebel against class distinction and oppression from the upper classes. This second stage brings us to the social drama of the Sturm und Drang. The primal aim of the drama of this period was to tear down class distinction. Lessing's dramas

had given the first indication of the equality of man irrespective of class, and the period of Sturm und Drang that followed Lessing emphasized the superiority of the middle classes over the higher in morality and in intelligence. This extreme type of drama is represented by such plays as Goethe's "Götz von Berlichingen" (1773), Schiller's "Die Räuber" (1781), Leisewitz' "Julius von Tarent" (1774), Klinger's "Sturm und Drang" (1776). At this high point Sturm und Drang would not recognize any social class or institution whatsoever. The reason for this was that the philosophy of the age emphasized the individual as the only reality and declared open hostility against society. It maintained, furthermore, that character is shaped by its own nature and rises superior to its environment and that society, in consequence, does not function as a mold of character. "Away then with society and all social institutions," was its battle cry.

The subject of fallen woman is a favorite one of the Sturm und Drang period, because it allows opportunity to show class distinction and consequent antag-

onism. In German literature a dissolute man of the upper class seeks his victim among the women not of his own class, but of the lower classes. Heinrich Leopold Wagner's "Kindermörderin" is the best type of all the plays dealing with this theme, and I shall, for that reason, confine myself to it in considering Sturm und Drang period. Lenz has two plays worthy of mention, "Hofmeister" (1774) and "Soldaten" (1776) wherein the fallen woman plays a considerable rôle, but they are not serious dramas. Lenz himself called them comedies.

WAGNER'S "KINDERMÖRDERIN" (1776).

"Kindermörderin" is a tragedy of the suffering brought upon a burgher family by the licentiousness of a proud soldiery. Wagner who favored the middle classes chose the story of a woman's fall to convey the idea that the upper classes oppress the lower. All in all, the author selected a "milieu" wherein his idea could have been carried out successfully, but he falls short of making his point carry because the blow he hits the soldier class is too weak. After the distracted Evchen has killed her child, the lieutenant arrives to

marry her. His failure to appear soon enough to save her was due only to a complication of circumstances, a trick of the dramatist to bring about a tearful close, for audiences enjoyed tears those days; it was the period of excessive weeping in the German as well as the English and French literature. The catastrophe at the close was most pathetic, but the old order of the world was saved. All the author's efforts to stir people into action against the impudence of the soldier class was dissipated into mere pathos.

Very satisfactory is the reason Wagner gives for Evchen's fall. He blames the mother, who is a frivolous, speculative, ambitious woman and fairly forced her daughter into her experience. She allowed the young man, as a roomer in her home, to take liberties with her daughter, thinking a marriage more likely if she humored the young fellow. The daughter was not weak but only a conventional type of girl, who approved everything done by the mother. Her father was as strict and uncompromising as her mother was lax and over-indulgent and the home was continually torn by dissensions

*Continue
blind* between husband and wife. Evchen chose to go the way of the lenient parent. When the mother contrived to prepare a night of drinking and dancing for herself, the daughter, and the lieutenant, her mother's presence reconciled her to the enjoyment of these questionable pleasures. This night of fun was Evchen's undoing.

Wagner makes Evchen's sin due to the conniving mother, rather than to actual weakness in the girl's character. Immediately after her fall, Evchen shows a nobility and strength that had slumbered heretofore. An occasion was necessary to bring out the strength of her character, in view of the fact that her home training had failed to do so.

HEBBEL- FIRST MODERN SOCIAL DRAMATIST.

The bourgeoisie for over half a century, ever since the Sturm und Drang, had been complacently vaunting their own probity and virtue. In their self-righteousness, they maintained that all the evils of life were caused by the oppression of the upper classes. Finally, they came to realize that they themselves were to blame for at least part of the misery and so they bitterly accused themselves of corruption. This change of front is the beginning of another stage in the evolution of the social drama. Though not wholly conquered, the idea of class distinction was steadily ~~loosing~~ ^{shaking} ground, as society was continually becoming more democratic. The lower classes were growing stronger and were gradually being identified with the upper classes, so that attacks were now aimed not so much against the upper classes as against society as a whole. Since men had begun to believe, moreover, that society is not an end in itself but a means by which its individuals can attain greater efficiency, the social drama of Hebbel and after Hebbel blames society for any lack in the

individual. Struggles begin to take the form of conflicts between an individual and society.

With Hebbel's "Maria Magdalena" begins Germany's true modern social drama. It is a protest against the old idea that the individual exists for society. Society for the individual, our modern attitude, is the great lesson of this drama. Class distinctions are ignored altogether and the conflict is restricted within the narrow limits of the middle class family which, to its members, is society. "Maria Magdalena" is not a "bürgerliche Tragödie" but a "Tragödie des Bürgertums," where a proud self-righteous society is represented as responsible for a woman's sin.

"MARIA MAGDALENA" (1844).

The dramatic action of "Maria Magdalena" confines itself largely to the results following a woman's transgression but it pictures in a vivid and effective manner a social condition which was the cause of her fall.

The will of a proud and dictatorial father domineers over family life in this play. The sacred-

ness of personality in others is a consideration far removed from his mind. Under the rod of unrelenting despotism, which enforces with monotonous insistence a ruthless puritanic morality, live wife, son, and daughter, and they secretly rebel.

In these conditions, Clara, growing into womanhood, has never dared to assert her own personality. She consents to become betrothed to a man she does not love and to surrender herself to him. In the course of events, when her betrothed withdrew his promise of marriage and she stood facing the fact that family dishonor and the consequent suicide of her father was inevitable, she sought death as the only alternative.

The picture of consequences in "Maria Magdalena" goes to show society's prejudice toward an erring woman. The penalty of distress and mental agony which Clara has to pay as a punishment for her sin is far greater than the penalty exacted of Leonard. The Sekretär, Clara's first lover, kills Leonard only after he had brought another girl into the same shame. Hebbel does not sanction a double code of morality but

he presents life in its acceptance of it. Even the Sekretär himself lets the conventional idea of a woman's fall prevent him from saving Clara in spite of the fact that he loves her and feels that she is a good and pure woman. "Über das kann ein Mann nicht weg." (Act II Scene 5.) Because Clara was a woman, society made her pay the price.

Although this play is mainly a story of the results of a woman's fall, it has also much significance as a detailed study of the heroine's own attitude toward the situation. Neither love nor natural impulse played a part in her fall. The motivation of her act with Leonard was threefold. First, her conception of the duty of obedience led her to obey Leonard's demands; it was her interpretation of "love, honor and obey" that her father had demanded in the home. Second, she wished to silence Leonard's reproaches that she still loved the Sekretär and was therefore unfaithful to him, her future husband. "-- um ihm, um mir selbst zu beweisen dasz es nicht so sei, oder um's zu ersticken, wenn's so wäre, that

Stall
 ich was mich jetzt--- (Clara's words in Act II scene 5).
 Third, she wished to kill the love she had for the Sekretär by making it impossible for her to entertain hopes of a marriage with him. If she should have a child by Leonard, all hopes of being able to marry a man other than Leonard would be vain. In this way she wished to make herself marry Leonard, whom she could not love, but whom her people favored. As her lack of will-power prevented her from controlling the situation that confronted her, her ruin was inevitable.

The sad story of Clara's destruction points out the need of respecting the sacredness of personality. When, within the artificial restrictions of society, self cannot be self, it sometimes bursts the bonds that confine it, and as a result it meets with destruction. In his Tagebuch, dated September 5, 1836, Hebbel wrote: "Das Weib ist in dem engsten Kreis gebannt; wenn die Blumenzwiebel ihr Glass zersprengt, geht sie aus." Clara is the victim of the absurd social law that demands subjection of self to arbitrary authority and ignores the sacredness of the rights of the individual.

The University of Minnesota
Graduate School
Minneapolis

May 5th,
1915

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Memorandum to

Professor Carl Schlenker:

Enclosed I am sending you a copy of the Master's ~~Doctor's~~ thesis, upon which you have already been asked to pass your judgment, as a member of the thesis committee. The judgment of the committee will be reported through the chairman and if favorable, certified by your signature to the blank, which has been sent him. All copies of theses should be returned to this Office, and they will later be distributed to the proper persons.

Sincerely, Guy Stanton Ford,
Dean.

THE MODERN SOCIAL DRAMATISTS.

As the influence of Ibsen upon the modern social drama of Germany was very great, it deserves mention here. Germany had been laboring under social and political difficulties during the years 1848 to 1880. This was a period of such unrest and national unhappiness as tended to draw men away from reality to the world of the imagination. In consequence the social drama after Hebbel gave place to the romantic drama. A reactionary movement accelerated by the influences of the social philosophies of men like Zola, Strindberg and Tolstoi arose, emphasizing Reality as the potent force in literary thought. Among other countries experiencing a like reaction was Norway where Ibsen gathered all the force of the new movement into an explosive bomb and with it shattered the gross romanticism of the existing theatre. The German drama looked up to him as the great champion of Reality, who satisfied their needs. He was the only dramatist of superlative power and energy who had suc-

ceeded in placing real life upon the boards with eminent success. In dramatic Form, German dramatists followed his example by discarding the artificial convention of the stage. They made their first attempt to banish the epigram and to make the characters address each other instead of the audience. Living figures of German national life trod the stage and discussed the vital questions of modern life. Ibsen's influence in Thought and Subject Matter was even greater. He taught a selfhood that was not selfish. It was he who threw a strong light on the responsibilities owed by one generation to the next; it was he who had the courage to question the redeeming value of deeds done in a grudging surrender to "duty"; it was he who made the world acknowledge that woman had an individuality and a right to use it according to her own needs and inclination. He was the first dramatist to voice the incipient feminism of the age. His Lona Hessel of "Pillars of Society" is the first new woman in literature- "to let in fresh air." Woman must be given a chance to unfold her womanhood free from the

oppression of a masculine régime; she must be made the companion to supplement him; she has the right to demand being treated as a human being, for woman's self-renunciation as an absolute condition for the general happiness of mankind, is all a foolish tradition and most unjust;- such was Ibsen's message on the woman question. The German drama responded and began to question the double standard of morality and the conventional marriage. It began to set up new ideals of love, of companionship between man and woman, and of individual freedom. The subject of woman and her sex relationship to man became immensely popular. "Die Freie Bühne" was founded in Berlin in 1889 with Ibsen's "Ghosts" as its first presentation. A month later Hauptmann's "Vor Sonnenaufgang" was given, the first drama of the naturalistic school in Germany. The repertory of the "Freie Bühne" consisted of the new revolutionary and naturalistic dramas prohibited by other theatres. Like Berlin, other German cities built "free theatres" where dramas of such men as Hauptmann, Sudermann, Max Halbe and Otto Hartleben were

given. The pioneer stage of the "Freie Bühne" enjoyed a triumphant success and modernity was the fashion.

In the field of the modern German drama, this thesis confines itself to Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-), Herman Sudermann (1857-), Max Halbe (1865-), Arthur Schnitzler (1862-) and Frank Wedekind (1864-). These men fairly represent the best that the modern German social drama stands for and they offer an appreciable amount of material for the fallen woman problem. Sex and the fallen woman are more frequently considered by them than by any of the other dramatists. The addition of minor dramatists such as: Hartleben, Hirschfeld, Max Dreyer would add nothing of value, partly, because they do not present our problem from any new or significant point of view, and partly, because the influence they exert upon the German drama is relatively small.

GERHART HAUPTMANN.

Gerhart Hauptmann gives to his sex problem a distinctly pathological bearing. Physically his characters with few exceptions are robust, passionate creatures. The fallen woman in his plays is very much a primitive or a peasant type with the elemental instincts uncontrolled.

"VOR SONNENAUFANG" (1889)

"Vor Sonnenaufgang" is not a wholly convincing play, but it offers suggestions on the question of immorality. Its distinct aim is to show the terrors of alcoholism by emphasizing the fact that the one and only outcome of indulgence in drink is vice and degeneracy both in the people who are addicted to the habit and in the generations that follow.

The picture of depravity in this drama is beyond words to convey. Alcoholism has established itself so firmly in the characters that they are lower than brutes. Sex immorality is presented as one of the most hideous consequences of habitual intoxication.

Frau Krause, the mother, has illicit relations with a lecherous fellow, the neighbor's son, whom she wishes to be the husband of her step-daughter, Helena. Among the maids, the same unmentionable relation exists with the hired men. Krause, the father, drinks incessantly and makes improper advances to the women housed under his roof. Helena, when only a girl, had to be sent away to save her from her vile father. The son-in-law is a rake of a fellow who, under a polished exterior, is even more obscene than the rest of them. The clammy, reeking filth in the morals of this home of drink is terrible.

Upon her return from school, the daughter Helena, a woman of fine feeling, finds herself in such environment. The brother-in-law shamefully insults her and the father in his drunken stupor goes farther. Feeling unsafe, Helena wishes to flee. At this point, Hauptmann begins to introduce his solution to such a situation. The love that arises between Helena and a young socialist, Alfred Loth, who comes to the home, offers a way of escape for her. But Loth who would

base marriage on eugenic laws forsakes Helena when he discovers the vice of the home and the fact that the two children of Martha (the married daughter) died as victims of alcoholism in parents and grandparents.

Hauptmann thus says that immorality is transferable to posterity and that tainted individuals have no right to marry and to increase the number of victims of degeneracy.

As to the question: How can those subject to such evil influence solve the problem of overcoming them, Hauptmann makes the answer, extreme as it is, Death is the solution. Helena takes her life because she saw no way of escaping the unspeakable horrors of her home.

EINSAME MENSCHEN. (1891)

"Einsame Menschen" deals vitally with the fallen woman problem because it sets forth the moral danger of Platonic love. Different from Ibsen's "Rosmersholm" (1886), Hauptmann's drama gives only the possibility of a transgression and not its fulfillment. Anna Mahr finds her way into the intimacy of a young married couple, unhappily mated. For the husband, she proves to be the inspiration of a kindred soul and

happiness itself; for the wife, a silent accuser of her own wifely shortcomings and her despair. The husband insists that he can continue his relationship with Anna in honor, but Anna sees the havoc her sojourn has occasioned in the home and fearing that a pure comradeship cannot be maintained, she leaves. Unable to reconcile himself to the loss of Anna's companionship and rebellious against the laws of society, the husband commits suicide.

That Platonic affinity can lead to sex immorality is the lesson of "Einsame Menschen", applicable to our problem, however inadequately Hauptmann substantiates that idea. Ibsen in "Rosmersholm" establishes the danger of Platonic friendship with far greater convincingness. Rebecca has in her intimate relationship with Rosmer actually become his mistress but by the recognition of their sin on the part of both Rebecca and Rosmer and their willingness to expiate it, they acknowledge the power of the moral law. In "Einsame Menschen" Anna Mahr conducts herself with far less definiteness than Rebecca toward social convention.

Inwardly Anna is very unconventional but she lacks sufficient stamina to express her convictions openly. Her departure only confirms the fact that she saw the danger of a temptation but the moral law that should bind all men and women to keep the marriage relation sacred is recognized neither by Anna nor Vockerat as inviolable.

"ROSE BERND." (1903)

In "Rose Bernd" Hauptmann emphasizes the physical charm of his heroine and makes her fall due primarily to the fact that she possesses healthy, normal sex impulses. Rose was an attractive, buxom peasant lass, active, eager for affection and very responsive to surroundings. She loved life, and the effect she had upon others was like that of the invigorating warmth of spring sunshine that stimulates life to its fullest expression. Men were attracted to her principally because of her charm of glowing health and physical beauty. In this regard Rose appears like a perfect female of the human species attracting sex opposites. Her own mother, according to Mrs. Flamm in Act II, spoke of her as passionate: "Ihr Blut is a wing gar zu

heisz." Rose herself certifies the power of her personal attraction in the following quotation of Act V: "Sie han an mich wie die Klettin gehangn!- ich konnte nie über die Strasse laufen! Alle Männer waren hinter mir her! Ich hab mich versteckt- ich habe mich gefircht, ich habe solche Angst vor a Männern gehabt! 'S half nichts, 's ward immer schlimmer dahier! Hernach, bin ich von Schlinge zu Schlinge getreten, dasz ich gar ni bin mehr zu Besinnung gekomma."

Life in Rose's parental home was entirely unfitted for a girl of her type. Here there was nothing but work and drudgery and no pleasure or recreation in any form. Even sympathy and love were sadly lacking. The mother was dead and the father was a stern, dogmatic man, who provided his children with food, shelter, and daily prayers, but he had as little appreciation of the genuine needs of the members of his family, as had Meister Anton in "Maria Magdalena." Keil, her bethrothed, was a pious, boresome fellow that could not appeal to a girl like Rose. It is not surprising, therefore, that she succumbed to Flamm, who was the

first person to show a genial regard for her. All that followed, even the killing of her child, may be traced to this want of home love and sympathy. Rose's own words give Hauptmann's message: " 'S hat een' kee' Mensch ne genug lieb gehat." (Act V).

Hauptmann has woman fall through sex impulse, which he makes strong in the characters he draws. If therefore woman follows impulse and thereby happens to transgress the moral law governing the relation between men and women, he calls upon society to be considerate toward the sinner. His social message in "Rose Bernd" is that of helpfulness toward the unfortunate. In "Vor Sonnenaufgang" he shows the social danger in the moral degeneracy of woman through the transmission of this characteristic to her offspring and maintains that social environment is an eminently strong factor in the moral life of an individual. In "Einsame Menschen" he holds that sex impulse is aroused at the least provocation and that for that reason an unguarded intimacy between man and woman is extremely dangerous.

HERMANN SUDERMANN.

Sudermann is serious in his attempt to solve the problem of the erring woman. Regarded from every point of view, her case has a potent social bearing for him. He makes society the cause of her fall and puts upon society the responsibility of her regeneration. To society, he would say, as the great Nazarene and lover of sinners once said to a crowd of sophisticated Jews: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone."

"DIE EHRE." (1889).

"Die Ehre" teaches that the love of money is the "root of all evil." The author regards woman's fall as one of the results that follow hard upon greed for position and luxury and attaches to her misfortune a great social significance.

Alma Heinecke lives in a home grown coarse and mundane because the necessities of life are procured by incessant labor with the result that no time is left to give thought to things spiritual. Since money has been their one lack, the Heineckes foolishly imagine that

money is the panacea for all ills. The luxury and gaiety of the employer's family is to them the "non plus ultra" of life. Consequently, when the rich gifts of Kurt, the employer's son, bring the hope of comfort and idleness, they grant this dissipated, young fellow an unquestioning entrance into their confidences. Money has become for them the standard of value.

Presents and attentions from Kurt also blind Alma, the daughter, to his real purpose. She is young, fun-loving and irresponsible. Naturally refined and beautiful, she longs to escape from her vulgar home and to gain entrance into higher circles, (Act III, Scene 4.), and so to enjoy the things of the great city that she continually sees about her. Kurt buys her pretty clothes, takes her to the dances and to the restaurants and cafés- a life new and exciting. This state of affairs continues until one day Alma finds herself disgraced and forsaken.

The desire to possess the beautiful is human. Moral strength is the only saving agent that will prevent that desire from being satisfied through illegi-

timate means. It was Alma's lack of moral strength that brought her to grief. The fact that Alma only reflected her home attitude toward life is the strongest factor in the value of "Die Ehre" for us. Herein does the dramatist condemn our money-crazed society for a large part of the social corruption we have because it sanctions money as the substitute for virtue.

"SODOMS ENDE." (1891).

"Sodoms Ende" tells the story of the decline of a promising young artist made sensuous by a corrupt society. Like "Die Ehre" which censured the frivolous poor of the middle class for their licentiousness resulting from their mercenary ambitions, so "Sodoms Ende" attacks the rich, vulgar middle class for the licentiousness resulting from their wealth and ease. Desire for wealth had corrupted the one and the possession of it the other. The value of "Sodoms Ende" is that by presenting a disagreeable picture it directs our attention to the beauty and efficacy of clean living.

Luxury, self-gratification, and sin reign su-

preme in the society of this play. In its circle gather the selfish, pleasure-seeking individuals of Berlin's high life, who have become dissipated through extravagant living. To them restraint is needless and virtue ridiculous; they long for the exciting and sensational to keep life even tolerably interesting. Naturally, they ignore morality. Husbands have affairs with women and wives find delight in questionable attentions from men. Intoxicated, they cry out for more of the wine of self-indulgence to stimulate their enfeebled existence.

Frau Adah is the product of this society and the Egeria of a coterie of men who find her home the rendezvous of sensual enjoyment. Any man of genius looking for pleasure is welcomed without a question. "In diesen Häusern macht man keine Umstände." (Weisze's words in Act I scene 3). Her husband, a wealthy speculator, who has renounced moral duty long since and entered upon immoral relations with women, gives but a passing thought to the men who are guests of his wife. Frau Adah loves life and determines to be happy whether

through good or through evil. She has the charm of personality that draws men to her, superior tact, and a sufficient amount of deception to make her a successful hostess in an artificial society. Bathed in luxury and ease with no respect for duty or labor, she smokes and drinks and invites her guests to follow her example. When the young, struggling artist, Willy, comes to her home, she befriends him and soon becomes his mistress. As a cover for her sinful relationship with him she has a villa built and presents it to him, presumably as a studio for his work. Her influence makes of Willy a dissipated weakling, unable to work or to heed the call of art, the beautiful and the pure.

The corruption which Willy receives from the society of Frau Adah he ultimately brings into his own home. In a moment of intoxication, he possesses himself of his innocent foster-sister, Klärchen, and the girl in despair drowns herself.

In opposition to the wasteful, dissipating influence of a life of debauchery this drama directs

attention to the invigorating effects of simplicity, frugality, and sincerity. Willy's home was beautiful and pure, and when still under its power, he rose to eminence. Clean living as indispensable for physical and spiritual efficiency, is the clarion note in "Sodoms Ende."

"HEIMAT" (1893).

In "Heimat" as in "Maria Magdalena" a stern despotic father, who jealously guards the sacredness of his parental authority, is the fundamental cause of a daughter's going wrong, but "Heimat" proclaims that the daughter's sin was a means of attaining the good. A woman's fall, according to this drama, therefore, is by no means such an atrocious offense against her own welfare as popular opinion would lead one to believe.

Magda's parental home was a narrow self-contented community that looked with disdain upon the sinner and staked happiness itself, if need be, to maintain the integrity of its own honor. Schwarze ruled his family with the military tactics which no one ventured to oppose and demanded an unquestioning obedience.

Magda, who was self-willed like her father, was driven out by him when she refused to marry the village pastor.

Away from the restraining influence of her provincial home, Magda was able to become a great artist. In "Heimat", Sudermann for the third time presents the artist as a Magdalen character. In "Die Ehre" the artist-life was characterized as morally insecure (Robert in Act III scene 4); "Sodoms Ende" is a study of libertinism among artists. In both these plays he condemns the license that has grown out of their liberty but in "Heimat" he strongly commends liberty as leading to the full development of the artist's character. According to Magda, genius demands a widely different and, so to speak, an elastic morality. She had rejected conventional propriety when she left her home, and in accordance with her extreme individualistic philosophy, she justifies whatever she does from the point of view that as an artist she has the right to prescribe what is good and proper. Throughout her artistic life, she shows a temperament of emotional intoxication- to feel, only to feel! Craving affection,

she gave herself to the young barrister, VonKeller. Her experience with VonKeller was to her the first one in a series of experiences leading to artistic perfection. Love, hatred, desire for revenge, distress, despair, motherhood followed in turn and trained her genius how to touch the hearts of her hearers. From the point of view of Magda as artist, her experience was indispensable.

Magda's motherhood experiences are very significant in their effects upon her character as woman. No play outside of Sudermann's gives fallen woman with a Magda-attitude toward her sin. To Magda, it was not a disgrace but, as it were, a holy transgression. It brought her all the real comfort of a mother's love strong to make sacrifices and to endure hardship. Years of energetic labor brought eventual triumph. Her sin had made her great.

JOHANNISFEUER (1900).

"Johannisfeuer" points to a recrudescence of primitive passion in natures trained to be orderly and moral. According to the Sudermann of this play the

laws of society that make restraint imperative defeat their own purpose. In every person's life there is a time when he rebels against the laws that repress the freedom of imperious human nature, a Johannisfeuer, when the fires are lit upon the hills and the whole country glows with wild light; then it is that human passions are aroused to run riot. (George in Act III)

In the breasts of two people the fires of St. John break out to unman them. Marikke and George have conducted themselves as useful and honorable members of the Vogelreuter family into which they have been adopted. Out of gratitude toward their foster-father, who wished to marry George to his own daughter Trude, they suppress the love that had grown in their hearts since childhood. But on St. John's night, the eve of George's marriage to Trude, this love bursts its bonds and Marikke and George yield to each other and natural impulse carries them beyond the confines of the social law. According to Sudermann's theory here of the transmission of traits, Marikke, as the illegitimate daughter of a thievish beggar-woman steals a man away

we are not told that the child was an illegitimate child.

from the love of another woman.

"Johannisfeuer" has an apologetic conclusion that does not conclude. The close does not result inevitably from what precedes it. The two lovers sacrifice their love and themselves to social authority;- George marries Trude and Marikke leaves to battle with life single handed. The idea that society has a right wholly to control the individual is inconsistent with the fundamental theory of the play itself and with the strong love of the man and woman in question, and furthermore is foreign to "Heimat" the play immediately preceding "Johannisfeuer." Sudermann is by no means clear in this play. In effect "Johannisfeuer" is neither an approval of the claims of society upon an individual nor a rebuff for the individual trespassing social law. The question therefore arises: Does Sudermann uphold the individual who ignores the social law and follows desire and instinct? "Es lebe das Leben" gives an answer to this question in an imperfect way.

*half a dozen
plays inter-
vened.*

"ES LEBE DAS LEBEN." (1902)

"Es lebe das Leben" draws attention, as did Hauptmann's "Einsame Menschen", to society's uncompromising attitude toward conventional marriage, and it neither absolutely denies nor sufficiently maintains the justice of this attitude. The conservative can find in "Es lebe das Leben" an endorsement of social morality, and the radical a refutation of the same. Outwardly Beata's life is sacrificed to uphold the established code of morals, but inwardly only to confirm her love for Richard whose political life she wishes to safeguard.

Enemies of Richard Volkerlingk publish rumors of his illicit relationship with Beata, another man's wife. How will lover, wife and husband meet this accusation is the question of the play. Beata does not openly defy the social law and assert the truth of her conviction that her relationship with Richard is fundamentally moral. Such a procedure would only jeopardize the happiness of all concerned and Beata lives for happiness in life. She therefore will re-

fute the rumor by taking her life. Since her ill health makes it improbable that she could have lived much longer in any case, her death will not create suspicion and Richard will be saved to continue his career of political usefulness. With the words "Es lebe das Leben," she drinks a poisoned vial, in her own heart condemning the law that prevents individuality from finding its fullest and greatest expression in its own congenial way, but, in effect, expressing a confirmation of the infallibility of the moral law in a world of men and women where order must be maintained.

Beata resembles Magda of "Heimat" as she points with pride to the connection between her trespass and her vital sense of freedom. To Magda her experience meant motherhood, and motherhood the greatest incentive to endeavor. To Beata, it brought perfection of personality; it made of her a woman of magnetic charm with power over men; she had "attained the harmony nature meant for her to attain." (Beata to Richard in Act IV.) Beata surrendered herself to Richard because she truly loved him. She has no faith in the conventional marriage and to her mind the love that binds her to Richard

is far stronger than the marriage bond between herself and husband. The code of morals she has is her own. Morality to her is really moral, if it brings individual perfection and happiness, her measure of life. It is her passionate love for life in its rich and variegated fullness that explains her deeds. Since her marriage denied her its realization, she secretly manifested a contempt for established morality and became a law unto herself.

"STEIN UNTER STEINEN" (1905).

The need of tolerance and of helpfulness toward repentant sinners in order to make them useful citizens is the message of "Stein under Steinen." Its condemnation of the social prejudice against sinners is extremely severe. Society is slow in giving the repentant criminal a "square deal." In its patronizing way it looks at him in the light of his crime and not of his personal worth, and gives him to understand that it puts no faith in him. Against such a society moral courage and strength of character in the contrite wrongdoer will not alone suffice to save him. To him fellow sympathy is an imperative necessity.

Under constant persecution a woman fallen from grace loses her trust in herself and can be nothing more than the dishonored woman, an evil scarcely tolerated. Lore fights against difficulties, and no matter how hard she works or how good she is, in the eyes of the people, she remains Lore, "Die Pucklige." This woman voices her discouragement in Act III scene 4 as follows: "Immer derselbe Druck. Das genügt. Man lacht und man weint und man schläft- man ist überhaupt ein Mensch wie andere und ist doch schon lang keiner mehr. Drin in Immersten lebt man gar nicht mehr. Man ist willenlos wie 'n Stein. Man wird gegen alles gleichgültig wie 'n Stein." The dawn of encouragement comes to Lore in the person of Biegler, a prisoner out on parole. Laboring under the same discouraging conditions, these two become mutually helpful. Inspired by the beauty of Lore's character and incensed over the cruel treatment she is receiving, Biegler rises up like a giant of power and threatens to kill the despicable man who having wronged her still persists in harassing her with taunting and derogatory

remarks. The bigness of his act draws the admiration of all, and for the first time in his life as a prisoner can he feel it possible to be himself. The strength of the mutual sympathy between Lore and Biegler conquered obstacles at last.

"Heimat" contends that fallen woman can reinstate herself through force of personality and character if only society will not interfere. "Stein unter Steinen" goes farther and shows that kindly support from society is absolutely necessary for such reinstatement. Lore has as much strength of character as had Magda and she was infinitely less selfish. In her humble life as a kitchen girl she did her best to supply every want of her father and child. As she was a quiet retiring woman in a lowly situation, she had little opportunity to overcome prejudice. Magda had artistic talent at her command and out in the artist-world her sin was easily forgotten, whereas Lore could not go out into the world of strangers to start life anew because kitchen work would not have sufficed for the support of father and child as it did in the home

*the setting is
Berlin*

village. Lore had to stay and suffer until a stranger-friend came to her aid.

Sudermann is a missionary, so to speak, preaching tolerance for the woman who has been unfortunate. He is the only dramatist who constructively shows that woman fallen from honor will, if given a chance, reinstate herself and become socially useful. Faith in the good makes the good, and if society would but look upon its sinners in the light of their repentance and ignore their past, the problem of the fallen woman would approach a solution. He would tell the woman to have courage, "to fight the good 'fight'" for true worth of character alone can win lasting recognition. Only one of his fallen women is found unequal to the task of facing the world after her experience. She is Klärchen of "Sodoms Ende" who was so completely crushed by a wicked world that she lost all faith in her trust in the goodness of men. Woman's violation of sex morality, is to Sudermann no worse than other grievous transgressions. Convention condemns a wo-

man for her misdeed without consideration of what may have caused her to err. This biased verdict Sudermann brands as infamous. Altogether he is inclined to be very lenient toward the erring woman. Motherhood, he emphasizes, as the great and natural mission of woman's life and to the Magdalen he would say what Marie of "Stein unter Steinen" said to Lore in scene 8 of Act I: "Du quälst dich mit deiner Schande! Schande!-- Gebären ist Gottesdienst." There is much in Sudermann's attitude toward the social law that arouses opposition. He deserves strong criticism because he fails to make his position clear to the reader. I believe that it is not his desire to be understood to counsel an individual freedom in sex life as "Johannisfeuer" and "Es lebe das Leben" virtually propose. But in these plays he altogether loses sight of the fact that the social law does give opportunity for the legitimate expression of natural instinct. In "Es lebe das Leben" (Act II scene I.), the Prince attacks social morality because it functions as a check upon pure instinct and in marriage, in his opinion,

tends to produce a degenerate offspring from the very fact that choice in the selection of the best parent-hood is withheld. This idea (not unrelated to the main thought of "Es lebe das Leben") is as absurd as it is socially dangerous and requires no further comment. The transmission of traits to offspring is a point of interest in Sudermann, not so much from the pathological point of view, emphasized by Hauptmann, as from the moral standpoint. Marikke in "Johannisfeuer," for example, is portrayed as a moral renegade because her mother was the same. Sudermann deserves credit for beginning a constructive campaign to turn public opinion against the double standard. In "Heimat" and "Stein unter Steinen" he fairly anathematizes the man who in his pride takes advantage over woman and moves in the society of fellow men "concealing fatherhood in his pocket." Another phase of the double standard is treated in "Die Ehre." This play shows the injustice of a licentious upper class encroaching upon the vitality of the lower for self-gratification as did Wagner's "Kindermörderin" of the preceding

century. The double standard as an imposition upon the poorer and weaker classes is presented in a superlative way by Schnitzler of Vienna, a contemporary of Sudermann.

ARTHUR SCHNITZLER.

The world of Schnitzler is indulgent toward man but contemptuous of women. Schnitzler draws his material from the gay life of the aristocracy of Vienna and portrays Viennese lovers of the upper class and women of any class or none engaged in mere flirtation or in genuine love affairs as the case may be. For his men he makes love a passing incident to add to their repertory of experiences; for his women he makes love their very life. The Schnitzler woman yields meekly to man and meets destruction through him always. Timid, forbearing, she is only half-conscious of her strength, whereas man is a free, pleasure-loving creature, the lord of creation.

Fallen woman, in consequence, is a favorite character in Schnitzler. She figures in "Liebelel," "Märchen," "Das Vermächtnis," and "Die Einsame Weg." See ✓
The first three plays mentioned present the injustices perpetrated by a double-code society and the fourth pronounces that code inhuman and unjust.

"LIEBELEI." (1896)

"Liebeleï," like "Anatol" (a series of one-act plays by Schnitzler very widely read by Americans) is most distinctly Schnitzleresque. It exhibits a world wherein the mission of woman is to serve as a victim for the pleasures of man, who is presented as being congenitally unable to exist without the diversions of "wine and women." Woman must be pretty and sweet and always ready to offer herself for his recreation. This idea is the conventional Viennese attitude toward life, taken by all as a matter of course.

Fritz's last liaison is Christine's one and only love affair. A pure, innocent, young girl, she knows little of the ways of life and nothing of the treachery of dissolute men. She keeps house for her father, a poor musician, and leaves her household duties only to accompany her father to and from the theatre and to attend church. Realizing that his young daughter ought not to forego the pleasures of youth, the father lets her go out with a girl friend. In the company of this friend she happens to become

acquainted with men who play with love and the purity of unsuspecting girlhood. It was her great confidence in the goodness of people that led her to trust Fritz implicitly, then to love him and finally to submit to him, with the result that she ultimately commits suicide in despair. w.

Christine's ignorance of the world's wickedness brought distress to her. In this fact lies the great value of "Liebelel" for our investigation. Prudish people imagine that a girl's ignorance of sin is her greatest feminine charm, but the truth of the matter is that many girls come to grief because of lack of knowledge. "Liebelel" proves that ignorance cannot serve as a protection against wickedness and that knowledge of the truth will best guarantee a girl's safety. Trust in the good is a maxim not wholly practical in a world that is by no means all good.

"MÄRCHEN" (1894).

In the first act of Märchen the conventional uncharitable attitude toward a woman who has fallen is far on the way toward being overthrown as an old

tradition and foolish prejudice. But in the two following acts the Viennese double standard overrules all the radical arguments in favor of unfortunate woman, and the old cruel point of view remains a well-defined reality. Like "Liebeleien," "Märchen" is built upon the assumption that men have a natural right to mistresses and that women must adjust themselves to that condition. It dogmatically asserts that a man who meets a woman with honest love can demand absolute purity of her, no matter what his own past has been.

A fallen woman can, therefore, entertain little hope of a happy marriage. Society regards Fanny, the heroine, who in mind and in morals is intrinsically superior to many other women, as inferior to these women because of the character of the sin which she had committed. Fanny had fallen, has repented, has become like Magda of "Heimat" a great artist and a beautiful woman, and has finally engaged herself to Fedor, whose breadth of mind condones her past. He loves her for her personal qualities but on the eve of marriage he finds that he cannot ignore her sin and face a

society whose criticism will jeopardize his reputation and future happiness. For the second time love and marriage are withdrawn from Fanny because of her former sin. She pays that penalty simply because she is a woman. The following quotation (words of Fanny to Fedor in Act III) embodies the great idea of Märchen: "Sie bleiben doch der Mann, dem alles erlaubt ist- und ich die Verlorne für immer."

"DAS VERMÄCHTNIS." (1898)

"Das Vermächtnis" exposes the moral fiber of men living according to the double code. It shows these men entirely lacking in the sense of responsibility toward those helpless women made by them illegitimate mothers and presents the wives and sisters acquiescing, in a state of society that would disgrace the Turk. In "Märchen", a woman who has not been perfectly pure is not considered worthy to be the wife of such a man, and in "Das Vermächtnis" she is denied even home and shelter, so that such men may be saved the social discomfort of having their own questionable morality disclosed.

Hugo dying, leaves his illegitimate child and its child-mother, Toni, as a legacy to his people. In their astonishment they but half willingly promise to carry out the dying man's wishes. The question: Will Hugo's people keep their promise and provide a congenial home for Toni? is answered negatively. After the child's death, the men of the household send Toni away, because her staying would draw suspicion against the integrity of the family and endanger its social prestige.

The striking feature of this play is the weakness exhibited by the women. They feel the injustice done toward Toni and yet they comply with the men's demands and let them rule womankind in a question that concerns woman so vitally. One woman, Franziska, gave promise of strength when she refused her lover, because he had urged Toni's departure but before the curtain falls we feel that she, too, will submit and will be subservient to her father's will that she come back to her lover. Would women here contest the

right to control them that the men assume, men would then find it necessary to adopt a mode of living more honest and more clean.

"DER EINSAME WEG" (1903)

The value of "Der Einsame Weg" for the fallen woman problem consists in its attack upon the double standard and in its presentation of the fact that it is through so perverted a standard that men can evade their duty to offspring and that children must suffer by having parents whom they cannot respect. "Der Einsame Weg" also introduces the first Schnitzler woman who raises her voice in words of withering scorn against double morality. To find a Schnitzler woman aggressive for womankind is extremely gratifying.

Julian Fichte is the irresponsible Don Juan type of "Anatol". He deserts Gabriele a short time before the day set for their marriage and his son is born to her soon after her marriage with another man. After inveigling Irene Herms to surrender herself to him, he leaves her also. In Act III, when Irene and Julian meet after many years of separation, Irene re-

veals herself to be quite different from the usual Schnitzler woman in that she has an aggressiveness, an effrontery, and a courage lacking in the others. Now past middle age, she realizes that it is a misfortune to be without children. She regrets having refused the motherhood that should have been hers as a result of her relationship with Fichte. In having no scruple as to motherhood outside of marriage, she is perhaps as much the sinner as the sinned against, but she is directly moral in being unmercifully severe toward men who shirk the duties attached to fatherhood. The double standard which places the whole burden of responsibility to offspring on the shoulders of the women and permits men to evade that responsibility, she denounces. In Act II, scene 3, are her words: "Der beste von euch ist in diesen Dingen noch immer ein Art von Schuft. Weisz denn einer von euch wie viele von ihm (of himself, viz: children) in der Welt herumlaufen? Ich weisz wenigstens dasz ich keins gehabt hab. Weiszt du's überhaupt? Children so begotten are not the fruit of love, and they feel toward their parents a

secret resentment. Felix, the illegitimate son of Fichte and Gabriele, when he hears how his father has evaded his duty as a father, withdraws love and respect from him and offers them to the fosterfather who had been betrayed by both his parents. No play outside of "Der Einsame Weg," touches in the slightest way upon the problem of illegitimacy as viewed by the child himself. That this play does so reflects credit upon the author. Here he reveals himself as serious in an issue vital both to women, who must be the mothers of posterity and to posterity itself.

Schnitzler makes his greatest contribution in his condemnation of the double standard of morality. In spite of the many criticisms made against Schnitzler, as a dramatist not seriously interested in social betterment, he is undoubtedly sincere in this one question. He does not censure the libertine in the same direct way as does Rachel Crothers in "A Man's World," but instead he produces his effect indirectly by picturing the evils resulting from that code and by representing the sufferers indignant over its injustice. To

Schnitzler the double standard is a great wrong both toward woman and toward offspring. Society does not question the honor of the woman who marries not for love but for money or position but it regards the woman who unfortunately falls victim to man's exaggerated idea of his own privileges as forever disgraced and gives her a poor chance for the happiness of love and marriage, because it sanctions such men in their demand for wives purer than they are. This attitude toward life Schnitzler regards as infamous. A perverse moral standard by which irresponsible men are able to escape the duties of fatherhood toward their illegitimate children is of untold injury to offspring and Schnitzler denounces it. Though he does not seem to condemn parenthood outside of marriage he makes very clear that man has no inherent sexual privilege over woman, and that parenthood brings a mutual responsibility sacred to fatherhood as well as to motherhood.

MAX HALBE.

"JUGEND" (1893)

Max Halbe has but one play, "Jugend," that offers material for our investigation. His contribution toward an understanding of the causes of the forfeiture of virtue is important, especially for our day, when courtship conducted as a series of indiscrete, sentimental demonstrations are regarded by the masses as legitimate forms of entertainment between young lovers.

Feeling dominates the characters of "Jugend." Fore-sight and common sense neither impel nor check their acts. Spring has come and it is the love and freedom that fills all nature that influences the people. It is very Halbe-like to let some natural phenomenon cast its spell upon the conduct of his characters and carry them beyond self-control. According to Lothar*: "Sonne, Wind, Wetter und Regen beeinflussen die Handlungen Halbes mehr als die Taten der Menschen." Anochen and Hans, both impulsive and physically exuberant, abandon themselves to their passion unrestrained by Father Hoppe, who wishes to live

* Lothar: "Das Deutsche Drama" p. 154.

over in happy reminiscences the love of his own youth long ago.

There is conclusive proof in "Jugend" that familiarities between the sexes lead to moral danger. Madly in love, Annchen and Hans expressed this love in kissing, in embracing, and in lying in each other's arms. Their unrestricted caresses provoked physical desire. Annchen's weakness in temptation, which she had inherited from her mother, caused her to forget the sacredness of the moral law.

Lothar * maintains that it was Halbe's purpose to extol young, beautiful love carried to its completion in ardent passion. I disagree with his view. If Lothar is right, Halbe failed to reach his aim. To have a love so beautiful and pure end wretchedly and unhappily would be a strange way of extolling such a love. It is undoubtedly the lyric accompaniment throughout the drama that suggests this idea to Lothar. But such an hypothesis is insufficient for purposes of a practical analysis. "Jugend" simply shows that love, even if pure and innocent, when let to express itself

* "Das Deutsche Drama." p. 146-149.

in amorous familiarities often results in serious transgression.

The dramatist puts responsibility of sin not wholly upon the young people, but also very definitely upon their guardian who unconsciously encouraged them to yield to temptation. Father Hoppe suggested familiarity to them at their first meeting when he urged them to kiss in greeting. This first kiss was the spark that set their passionate natures on fire. The old priest judged their youthful natures by his own youth which was "nicht so romantisch angehaucht," and in his great love for, and trust in, human nature had not the foresight to divine any evil that could follow upon a beautiful love. Under his kind indulgence, therefore, what was beautiful and innocent led to misery, a warning to guardians charged with the care of boys and girls.

FRANK WEDEKIND.

Frank Wedekind of Munich has attracted a great deal of criticism in Germany and elsewhere. What his aim as a dramatist really is, is not clear. That he represents the climax of the modern movement in Germany, the storm center of ultranaturalism, helps us to understand him in part. Various are the opinions critics express of Wedekind. George Henry Payne * says that he is only "part of the back-wash of the naturalistic movement." Mr. Ziegler, who has translated "Frühlings Erwachen", in his preface called "Proem for Prudes", says of Wedekind: "In Germany, he has been recognized for some time as one of the leaders in the new art of the theatre. Naturally enough his plays are too outspoken in their realism to appeal to all his fellow countrymen but he is sincere." German critics are more uncertain about him. To Albert Goergle** he is uneven, peculiar, bizarre. He calls him "ein Ideen-grotesker Künstler", and maintains that he presents unsolvable riddles to the public. R. Lothar *** calls him "ein Dichter der närrischen Einfälle" and asserts,

Soergel

*In Record Herald (Chicago). Quoted by Current Literature for April, 1908.

**"Dichtung und Dichter der Zeit." p. 828.

***Quoted from Current Literature April, 1908.

"Er giebt uns ein Gefühl des Mitleids gemischt mit Ekel!"

On the title page of "So ist das Leben" stands a bitter remark of Julius Hart (1901) that reads: "In der deutschen Kunst von Heute giebt es nichts was so gemein ist wie die Kunst Frank Wedekinds." The people of Berlin have received his plays very unfavorably because they could not satisfactorily discover whether he means to propose real problems or whether he merely scoffs at the credulity of his audiences. Yet Dr. Martin in "Das Literarische Echo" (Berlin)* affirms that Wedekind takes his moral doctrines seriously and that his motive is not to make a sensational appeal to popular audiences but to enlighten by expressing the truth. It is this enigmatic character of the man and of his drama that has aided in part to bring him to the public eye and given him a wide popularity. I feel that Lothar is right about Wedekind. He does in fact draw upon our sympathy but yet arouses a sickening aversion toward his sex problems.

In his dramas sex life is presented in its exaggerated and even unhealthy state. Love and the

* Quoted from Current Literature April, 1908.

woman question, he regards from the physiological point of view, always making sex the driving force of life. Wedekind doesn't put much faith in the spiritual element in humanity. His human beings are animals, divided into males and females, forever at war with each other. To him love is sex passion that dominates all feeling and reason. Sex plays its part in life but the idea that it furnishes the motive of everything done by men and women in relation to each other is repugnant to right thinking people. The following examples well illustrate Wedekind's conception of sex as a power beyond control. In "So ist das Leben" the youthful princess, Alma, in exile with her royal father is forced to disguise herself as a boy as the only means of securing sufficient protection against men. In the same drama the son of the reigning king, who is reputed to be a chivalrous, noble, prince, had hounded a girl through the streets to insult her and now bears the scar he received in a scuffle with her rescuers. (Act I). The hero in "Marquis von Keith" gloats over the fact that he is a bastard and says of

his father that he was "highly intellectual and keen in mathematics and other such precise subjects" and that his mother was a gypsy. (Act I.). By making this statement he intimates that his father had mental restraint sufficient to become a great master of mathematics but considered the control of sex impulse beyond his power, as it is beyond all human power, according to the Wedekind criteria.

Woman in violation of the moral law is found in three of Wedekind's dramas, "Frühlings Erwachen," "Erdegeist" and "Büchse der Pandora."

"FRÜHLINGS ERWACHEN." (1891).

There is much to say in favor of "Frühlings Erwachen" in spite of its sensationalism. It is a tragedy of childhood, as the author himself calls it, a tragedy calling attention to the needs of adolescence. Puberty is the birthday of the feelings and emotions. In "Frühlings Erwachen" groups of boys and girls of adolescent age are portrayed speculating about the mystery of life. The author sets up a series of pictures that tell the story of these children and

logically shows that degradation and even death may be their fate as the outcome of parental reticence.

The girls are for the first time awakened to feelings of love. Their keen interest in boys and in babies furnishes the topic of conversation. Wendla, just out of short dresses, scornfully refuses to believe the stork story about the origin of babies. Wendla's mother, considering her daughter too young to receive detailed information on such a subject, answers her importunate questioning by affirming that an infinite great love for a man grants woman motherhood. Like the average girl, Wendla loved babies and wished one for herself. One day she and Melchior met out alone. Instinct drew them together and not knowing that rules and regulations have been imposed upon the emotions and acts of man and woman, they commit the "sin of the flesh." Poor Wendla is sent to her grave by the abortive administered with the connivance of her affectionate but mistaken mother.

"Frühling's Erwachen" shows that ignorance of the sex function leads to transgression. Wendla and

Melchior from Wedekind's point of view are as innocent as mating birds. He makes a plea here for the broader knowledge of child life and for a greater sympathy for their needs and protests against bringing them up ignorant of sex. This play is emphatically an endorsement of the recent movement for the sex education of children. "This play is not written for children, but no understanding thoughtful reader will lay it down without feeling moved in more than one respect to earnest contemplation."*

THE "LULU" TRAGEDIES, "ERDGEIST" AND
"DIE BÜCHSE DER PANDORA."

"ERDGEIST" (1897).

"Erdgeist" is a perversion of facts in human life. It proclaims woman a seducer of men and men always ready to fall victim to her sly and coquettish domination over them. Love plays no part in the relations of men and women to each other; it is only "das Gemeine das uns hinab zieht"- lust that excites interest in the opposite sex. Wedekind maintains that just so long as men deign to look upon woman,

*Franz Stuck to its 17 edition.

whom nature has made a seducer, will that mundane spirit the "Erdgeist," rule life. In his prologue he says of his heroine:

Sie ward erschaffen, Unteil anzustiften,
Zu locken, zu verführen, zu vergiften,
Zu morden, ohne dass es einer spürt."

Unheil

Then like the men in his play, he chucks her under the chin calling her a sweet creature and has the audacity to add: "Tu doch nicht so geziert."

Lulu has beauty of face and figure. When she was a young waif upon the streets, Dr. Schön took her into his home as his mistress and later married her off to a rich old man. The shock of learning that Lulu lives only to enjoy the flattery and attentions of other men whose mistress she is, causes the sudden death of her aged and jealous husband. Then she marries an artist, one of her admirers, who commits suicide when he discovers that she still serves her old lovers. The next man is Schön, whose protégée Lulu was before her marital experiences. When he comes upon the hideous reality that her home is the secret rendezvous of men, whom her seductive wiles have captured, among

them his own son, he falls into a violent rage and hands Lulu a revolver commanding her to shoot herself. Thereupon Lulu draws the weapon upon him and kills him. This tragedy brings the play to a close. Lulu pleads with Alva, the son, to save her from prosecution. "Es ist Schade um mich! Ich bin noch jung," are her words. To live and to reign the mistress of men is Lulu's goal of life.

"DIE BÜCHSE DER PANDORA" (1903)

"Die Büchse der Pandora" logically concludes "Erdgeist". Lulu plays her game as "Genus Mensch" only a little longer. After her escape from imprisonment for the murder of Schön, she lives as the mistress of Alva. Together they flee into France, where, through disappointment and loss of money, Alva falls ill. Here they happen to find lodging in the beautiful apartments of a white slave trafficker. Lulu refuses the offers of the procurer and with her lover and friends escapes into England. Hunger and cold drive them to the last extremity- Lulu becomes a "public woman" in the streets of a great city. The final

scenes reveal her complete moral degradation and close with the horror of her death.

Woman, "das verführerische Tier!" In the words of Alva in the last act of "Büchse der Pandora," woman "blüht für uns in dem Moment, wo es den Menschen auf Lebenszeit ins Verderben stürzt. Das ist nun einmal so seine Naturbestimmung." According to Wedekind, purity and virtue do not exist in woman. In "Hidalla" he declares that woman's chastity is but the empty dream of an idealist.

Altogether Wedekind offers very little encouragement to the person interested in solving the fallen woman problem. His only contribution lies in "Frühlings Erwachen" which shows the possibility of prevention but it unfortunately covers only rare cases. In none of his plays does he mention regeneration. The reason for this is that he does not believe woman can be regenerated, because she is naturally a creature of lust. That the heroine of the "Lulu" tragedies meets a terrible end follows only as the logical and natural result of her licentiousness and can in no way be regarded as

a moral lesson against sinful indulgence, because the Wedekind criterion is that human beings are primarily sex creatures. Consequently, a transgression of sex laws is as inevitable in the life of man, as the transgression of a law forbidding eating and sleeping. Wedekind makes sex life the primary object of man and lets exaggerated forms of it stand as typical and normal. For presenting such a false and vicious conception, he deserves to be condemned.

CONCLUSION.

All the German social dramatists, excepting Hebbel, make natural impulse the fundamental cause of a woman's transgression. . . Hebbel's heroine fell because she could not refuse "to love and obey" even if her own nature rebelled against it. In "Maria Magdalena" he presents Clara as distinctly free from the driving force of sex instinct. At the other extreme, stands Wedekind who portrays fallen woman in his "Frühlings Erwachen" as having fallen through sex instinct alone. His heroine, Wendla, followed instinct and transgressed social law through ignorance. All dramatists outside of Hebbel and Wedekind present fallen woman as the victim of natural instinct impelled to action by various causes inherent in her character or existing in circumstances and environment.

Fallen woman as portrayed by the German dramatists may from the standpoint of the causes of their sin be classified as follows:

- I. Woman who disregards the social law.

Though the woman in question may have self-restraint, she does not believe that sex morality necessarily lies within the confines of the social law. She does not check natural impulse, if it leads to what to her mind is good. This is a question of attitude.

Ex: Frau Beata in "Es lebe das Leben."

Irene Herms in "Der Einsame Weg."

II. Woman who recognizes the authority of the social law.

(a) The woman, although she recognizes the authority of the moral law, fails because she is not willing to deny herself pleasure. This is a question of selfishness of character.

Ex: Frau Adah in "Sodoms Ende."

Lulu in "Erdegeist."

(b) The woman in whom some defect in character yields under the pressure of overwhelming circumstance. This is a question of lack of resistance.

Ex: Evchen in "Kindermörderin."

Rose in "Rose Bernd."

This last type is the favorite of the German dramatists. It is in their delineation of this woman that they contribute much of value on the fallen woman question. To German dramatists, external causes in connection with innate impulse often make a transgression follow as inevitable. I shall enumerate only the leading causes- those that have a particular social application to the problem.

Among the dramatists that take a pathological point of view are Wedekind, Sudermann, Hauptmann, Halbe and Schnitzler. Lulu in "Erdegeist" has a doubtful parentage and in "Sodoms Ende" Klärchen is the illegitimate daughter of an artist. In "Johannisfeuer", "Vor Sonnenaufgang" and "Jugend" we find emphasis put upon the transmission of tendencies from parents to offspring. "Jugend" advances the idea that indiscreet familiarity incites natural impulse to the sex act. Such a familiarity as a cause of sex transgression would bear repetition by more dramatists who aim to explain the causes of sex immorality to our people. Sudermann in "Stein unter Steinen" directly denounces

the double code of morality and Schnitzler's "Liebele", "Märchen" and "Das Vermächtnis" show the cruelty and injustice of the view that a double morality must be maintained because of the physical requirements of men, and in his "Der Einsame Weg" condemns this perverse moral standard as a wrong against mothers and offspring.

The girl who succumbs to a man who represents better social advantages is a frequent figure in the German social dramas. Wagner, Hebbel, Hauptmann in "Rose Bernd", Sudermann in "Die Ehre", and Schnitzler introduce such characters. The universal human desire to advance one's social future, as the cause of a woman's undoing, has been so frequently described as to become almost a dramatic convention in the German problem-play.

Uncongenial home environment is made a contributing cause of many girls going wrong. Hebbel's Clara of "Maria Magdalena", Hauptmann's Rose of "Rose Bernd" and Sudermann's Alma of "Die Ehre" live in homes which prove their ultimate ruin. "Die Ehre" borders also upon the shop girl side of this problem. Alma, because of the extreme poverty of her home, was tempted

to yield to questionable offers in order to possess beautiful things that money would buy.

Parents and guardians incur a large share of blame. The dramatists of "Kindermörderin", "Jugend", "Maria Magdalena" and "Rose Bernd" put the burden of blame upon the shoulders of elders. The guidance of a wise and good mother is the greatest lack in the lives of most of our unfortunate heroines. In Wagner's "Kindermörderin", Sudermann's "Die Ehre" and "Johannisfeuer" and Wedekind's "Frühlings Erwachen", mothers were in a large measure even the cause of a girl's fall. In Hebbel's "Maria Magdalena" the mother was too weak-willed to be of any positive help to anyone. In Schnitzler's "Märchen" the unwatchful mother is censured. In Hauptmann's "Rose Bernd", Sudermann's "Heimat" and "Stein unter Steinen", Halbe's "Jugend", Schnitzler's "Liebelei" and "Das Vermächtnis", Wedekind's "Lulu" plays, girls are without mothers and the lack of their maternal admonition resulted in much distress. According to these dramatists a big responsibility for girl's misfortune lies with mothers, - a fact worth con-

sidering. While on the one hand dramatists frequently blame mothers for a girl's fall, they blame fathers also on the other hand for a girl's lack of recovery from the evils following her sin. In Wagner's "Kindermörderin"; Hebbel's "Maria Magdalena"; and Hauptmann's "Rose Bernd" the girl fears her cruel and uncompromising father and succumbs. In Sudermann's "Die Ehre" and Schnitzler's "Liebelei" the father is so indifferent towards his daughter's future that she must either be resigned to her disgrace or die of despair.

The attitude German dramatists take toward the woman who transgresses sex law is invariably sympathetic. As she is oftentimes the central figure in the drama and never in accord with society, they needs must be in sympathy with her to gain the interest and unbiased consideration of the reader. Conventional society condemns the fallen woman as hostile to the welfare of society. Not a single instance was given by any of the dramatists where society was tolerant of the woman faithless to the law of social morality. The inhuman, unforgiving attitude toward the Magdalen is

severely attacked by those dramatists who are sincerely aiming to lift humanity to a higher plane of endeavor. Hebbel is the first one to point to society as the cause of her sin and to show results that in themselves pronounce a curse upon that same society when it refuses to be responsible for its acts, or even to forgive a sinner of its own creation. Hauptmann, Sudermann and Schnitzler follow Hebbel in this particular. Sudermann and Schnitzler go even further than Hebbel and show constructively that woman will reinstate herself if society will not interfere.

The attitude of woman herself toward her transgression is usually that of regret. Magda and Beata of Sudermann are the only women who maintain that their sin was a necessary means to a greater personality and Irene Herms, the spinster in Schnitzler's "Der Einsame Weg," deplores the fact that she has no child. Lessing's Marwood and Wedekind's Lulu show neither compunction nor desire to make amends. All the others like Clara of "Maria Magdalena" bitterly regret the sin that has brought unhappiness.

No dramatist wishes to deny that the social laws regulating the relations between the sexes are necessary and good but some authors, including Hauptmann in "Einsame Menschen" and Sudermann in "Es lebe das Leben" and "Johannisfeuer" indicate the fact that these laws in their actual application do not always coincide with natural morality. Parenthood outside of marriage is in Schnitzler's "Der Einsame Weg" given a sympathetic acknowledgement. All the dramatists imply that the social law might be better when they show us each unfortunate woman made to suffer by an inexorable law that takes no thought of the individual.

The social law, the natural law, and the individual conscience do not concur in the life of every person. This being true, the social law must sometimes sacrifice individuals for the good of the many. The social order has made the family a sacred institution strong to safeguard morality. As we have no substitute for the family, we must continue to keep the family sacred and must censure men and women who refuse to be governed by the laws which require marriage as

preliminary to the reproduction of the race. The sex instinct is one of the good, primary, necessary instincts. If we grant that the family is the only existing conservative force for morals, then we must admit that marriage furnishes the only sound expression of this instinct. With this in mind, what can be done to save woman from sex transgression? Though the German dramatists make sex instinct play the great rôle in a woman's fall, they emphasize some outside force in environment and circumstance as directly responsible and aim to show that if that force were not present, woman would have been spared her undoing. They propose the idea of easing circumstance and ameliorating the evils in the conditions in which a woman lives as a solution to the fallen woman problem. They lose sight of the fact that natural instinct is a strong inward force and that only a force from within the individual can be strong enough to overcome sex temptation by holding the instinct in check. In drawing fallen woman weak in her power of resistance these dramatists suggest strengthening of character and thereby imply only

that a woman's transgression is a question of the character of each individual woman. This is the extent of their contribution toward the real solution of the problem of the fallen woman.